Casual work continues to decline

Media Release

Released 12/12/2025

Source:
Characteristics of Employment, Australia, August 2025 (/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/characteristics-employment-australia/aug-2025)

There were 2.4 million employees who considered their job to be casual in August 2025, according to data released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

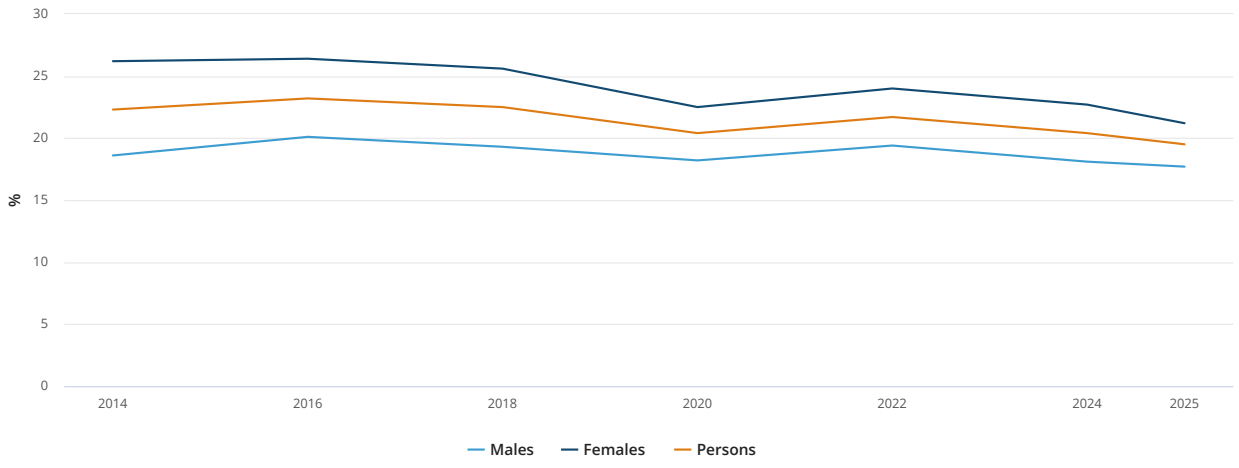
Sean Crick, ABS head of labour statistics said: 'There were 12.3 million employees in Australia in August 2025. This means that around one in five employees, or 19 per cent, were working as a casual in their main job.

'This share of casual employees has dropped by around four percentage points over the last nine years. In 2016, around 23 per cent of employees were casual, dropping to 20 per cent during the COVID period in 2020.

'We then saw the share of casual employees grow to 22 per cent in 2022, but it has been dropping since then.'

Women are more likely to work in a casual job than men, with 21 per cent of female employees working as casuals. This was 18 per cent for male employees.

Employees who considered their job to be casual



In addition to the 12.3 million employees there were 2.2 million self-employed people. Half of all self-employed people worked as independent contractors (51 per cent).

‘Of the 12.3 million employees, almost four per cent were working on a fixed-term contract in their main job. This reflects a small share of employees with a set end to their employment,’ Mr Crick said.

Most casuals prefer casual work

Almost three quarters (73 per cent) of casual employees preferred casual employment. The main reasons were flexibility (53 per cent) and higher hourly pay rate (23 per cent).

‘Of the 2.4 million casual employees, just under half were aged 15 to 24 years, and 61 per cent weren’t guaranteed a minimum number of hours of work,’ Mr Crick said.

The Accommodation and food services industry was the most casualised, with 58% of employees working in that industry in their main job employed as a casual in that job. Casual employees in the Accommodation and food services, Retail trade or Health care and social assistance industries combined made up 53% of all casual employees.

Around one in two employees had some say in start or finish times

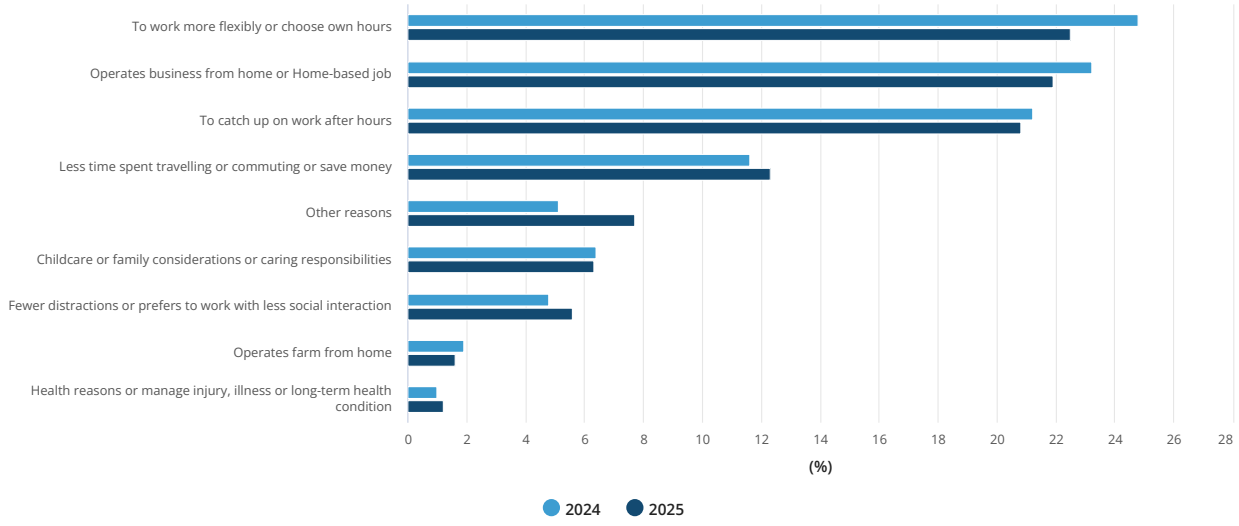
Around 7.5 million employees had some say in start or finish times. More than half of these employees (53 per cent) were able to choose their own start or finish times, while the remaining 47 per cent were able to negotiate their times with their employer in advance.

Around one in three people work from home

The proportion of employed people who usually work from home remained steady at 36 per cent. Around one-third of these people worked from home 1 or 2 days a week.

To work more flexibly or being able to choose their own hours was the main reason people chose to work from home (23 per cent). This was followed by operating their business from home or having a home-based job (22 per cent).

Main reason usually worked from home in main job



Median weekly employee earnings up $26 in 2025

‘Median weekly earnings of employees grew by 1.9 per cent in the year to August 2025,’ Mr Crick said.

‘That was a $26 dollar rise to $1,425 in 2025, up from $1,399 in 2024.’

For full-time employees, median weekly earnings rose by $41 to $1,741. While part-time employees saw their median weekly earnings up $7 to $701.

Employees in the 45-54 year age group had the highest median weekly earnings at $1750.

Median earnings for people with a non-school qualification were $1,600 compared to $1,000 for people without a non-school qualification. A non-school qualification is an educational attainment higher than secondary education, such as a diploma or bachelor degree.

Media notes

- Data from the Characteristics of employment (/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/characteristics-employment-australia/latest-release) survey are published in:
  - Employee earnings (https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/employee-earnings/latest-release)
  - Working arrangements (https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/working-arrangements/latest-release)
- Median is a statistical term referring to the middle point of a distribution. In the case of earnings, it refers to the earnings of the person in the middle of the distribution, with the same number of people earning more and less than them. Unlike means or simple averages, medians are not skewed by very high and very low earners.
- See our new Guide to labour statistics (https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics) for more information about the different labour measures, their purpose and how to use them.
- Access official, high-resolution images of ABS media spokespeople from our image library (https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/abs-image-library) .
- When reporting ABS data you must attribute the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or the ABS) as the source.
- For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Media Team via media@abs.gov.au (mailto:media@abs.gov.au) (9am-5pm Mon-Fri).
- Subscribe to our media release notification service (https://www4.abs.gov.au/ausstats/notifications.NSF/Web+Pages/ABS+Email+Notification+Service?OpenDocument&js=enabled) to get notified of ABS media releases or publications upon their release.
- Watch our data crash course (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=le2K3PNejU4&list=PLR8_RxifMwL4JQTxYclMANzga67VBlyhj&index=11) , designed especially for journalists, to learn how to find, download and interpret our data.